Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1386 March 5, 2004

The following is an advisory. Ladies and gentlemen, with a list of thank-you's for supporting us, heres our Treasurer and Support Fund Administrator Andy Jarema, N6TCQ:

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Still playing "catch-up" for our supporters, in the month of June last year we heard from:

Monthly contributor Benton Bonney, W4PE of Orlando; Joseph Bartzi, Jr., KC8DKF of Columbus, OH; mnthly contributor Frank Hemko of Harrods Creek KY; te Hualapai (Walla-pie) ARC of Kingman, AZ; monthly contributor William Walters, WA2IBM, of San Jose; monthly contributor Scott Hensley of the Area Communications Team, also in San Jose and an "Aloha" from Corky Kirk, Jr., W6ORS of Hilo, HI.

Thank you to everyone, and we promise to do our best to continue to earn your care and support. A reminder that Newsline is a 501c 3 California non-profit corporation. FCC regulations prohibit us from telling you exactly how to support us, but that information is on our website at www.arnewsline.org. That address will be repeated at the end of the newscast. I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ.

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Thank you Andy. And now, Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1386 with a release date of Friday, March 5th, 2004 follows in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T.

Help from down-under in the fight to save Amsat Oscar 40 and lots more on the fight to stop B-P-L. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1386 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: HELP FROM DOWN-UNDER IN REVIVING AO-40

The AMSAT Oscar 40 ham radio satellite is still missing in action,

but more international help in bringing it back to life is coming almost every day. The latest is from down-under as Brett Dawson, VK2CBD and the team of Australia's Parkes Observatory lend their support to AMSAT Germany in the recovery effort. Q-News Trevor Teague, VK4BAT, reports:

A 4 MHz wide spectrum with centre frequency of 1097 MHz was scanned with high level technique in order to find the LO frequency of the AO-40 L1 receiver. The fact that nothing was heard of the L1 receiver's LO does not lead to the conclusion that AO-40 is completely dead. The receivers of Parkes are not really fitted for frequencies below 1.25 GHz, and naturally one does not know how good the L1 receiver's LO is shielded or how much of the signal would go through the antenna to the outside world.

As previously reported, the main battery pack that powers AO 40 is believed to have short circuited keeping the auxiliary battery from powering the bird. As this newscast goes to air the rescue effort continuing. (Q-News)

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ENFORCEMENT: FCC SEEKING INFORMATION ON ALLEGED FELON HAMS

Back here in the United States, our FCC wants to know if several people on a list it has are felons convicted of an array of very serious crimes. The agency's Daryl Duckworth, N-N-Zero-W, explains:

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Duckworth: Seven inquiry letters were sent to individuals thought to be licensees who are incarcerated on felony convictions listed on sex offender registration lists or (who) recently served prison sentences for felony convictions. In these cases, the names match our license records and preliminary information is that the subject is the same person listed in our database.

These inquiries seek first to establish whether that is the case, and, second, to determine what affect the offense has on the qualifications to retain a Commission license.

This has been Daryl Duckworth, NN0W, reporting.

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The FCC did not provide names but it did give conviction information and the locations and offenses. The list includes hams believed to have been convicted of offenses ranging from sexual abuse to child molestation and even murder. (FCC, RAIN)

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RADIO LAW: JUDGE ORDERS TECHNICAL TESTIMONY IN ALLEGED JAMMING CASE

A Wisconsin federal judge has refused to close the courtroom for testimony by employees of Motorola during the trial of a defendant who allegedly tried to jam police and fire communications. on several occasions last year. In denying Motorola's motion, Judge John Shabaz said on February 27th that the right of Rajib Mitra to a fair trial outweighs Motorola's right to protect its trade secrets.

According to the Madison Capital Times, attorneys for Motorola had argued national and local security concerns as reasons that it did not want public disclosure on how its radio equipment was allegedly jammed by Mitra. The government planed to call five Motorola employees to explain how its Smartnet II radio equipment can be disrupted. Motorola claimed this not only exposed its trade secrets but also placed at risk the lives of law enforcement officers that depend on the proper functioning of their radio communications systems.

But assistant U.S. Attorney Tim O'Shea opposed Motorola's motion, as did Mitra's attorney. Christopher Van Wagner argued that removing the public during his client's testimony would prejudice the defendant. Judge Shabaz agreed with the prosecution and defense. He overruled the Motorola request and ordered the employees to testify noting that no one in the public is coming to his court to find the formula to jam radio frequencies. He noted that this kind of technical testimony can be removed from trial transcripts when they are produced.

Mitra's trial was to began on Monday, March 1st. He faces two charges of using a computer to interfere with police communications. If convicted on both counts he faces up to 20 years in prison. (Capital Times)

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RESCUE RADIO: EMERGENCY COMM GENERATOR STOLEN

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, with a late breaking story. Dateline San Antonio, Texas where, last Saturday night, February 29th, the San Antonio Radio Club had one of its trailer and generator systems stolen.

Paul Guido, N5IUT, reports over the Public Relations remailer that it was a 12.5 Kilowatt Onan unit. The club's biggest and best generator.

A police report has been filed that includes some very good pictures of the trailer with the generator on it. If you have any information on its where-abouts, please contact Paul by e-mail to Pguido2003a@broadwaybank.com or call the San Antonio police.

The San Antonio Radio Club has been a Bexar County, Texas, emergency communication resource since way back in 1919. (N5IUT)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the K2CIB repeater of the Rockland Repeater Association, serving New City New York.

(5 sec pause here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: THE 11 METER CB ANGLE

Over the past several months we have been hearing about the potential interference to Amateur Radio that's expected if the FCC proceeds with the rollout of Broadband over Powerline Internet access. But ham radio is not the only service in the 2 through 80 MHz spectrum where B-P-L will operate. Shortwave broadcasters are concerned that their audiences will disappear if they cannot be heard over B-P-L generated noise. Also, a number of emergency communications networks have told the FCC that their vital communications will negatively impacted as well.

The one service that nobody has talked about is 11 meter Class D CB radio. An unlicensed service at 27 MHz with millions of radios crammed into 40 overcrowded channels with many operators running far more power than legally allowed. This week, Amateur Radio Newsline's Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, looks at CB, B-P-L and the collision between the two that may not be to far away.

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If those who want to bring us Broadband Over Powerline thought amateur radio operators were going to be a nuisance to their plans, they may have an even bigger headache on the horizon. Citizens Band radio operators could prove to be the biggest threat to B-P-L.

The FCC defines CB as a private radio service that doesn't require users to have a license. It hasn't for years. The FCC pretty much gave up regulating the spectrum. It asks users to enjoy their radios but to stay within the five-watt power limit of most of the radios.

But since the FCC gave up trying to keep track of those operating on 27 Mhz, problems have mushroomed. A class of CB operator has emerged who likes to use high-power amplifiers to talk with people several states away.

How powerful? If you check out some of the CB websites, you'll find amplifiers being sold that push the envelope well beyond the legal limit - say 500 watts, 1,000 watts, even 5,000 watts and higher.

Many contemporary electronic appliances, because of poor RF shielding, are susceptible to interference caused by overmodulated CB signals.

The FCC could find itself in a real quandry if the B-P-L industry demands help in going after those who push the limit and disrupt their systems. Imagine the complaints.

Because the FCC can't go to a database to help it find abusers or offenders, it's going to be a difficult if not impossible - task to track these illegal operators.

Will the industry end up funding the FCC's enforcement effort? That would be unprecedented.

Let's be clear: Not all CB operators are outlaws.

Many use their 11 meter radios for personal communications on trips, on hikes, on fishing expeditions. And, yes, the truckers are still big users of the spectrum.

But if you search the worldwide web, you will find CB sites with postings from folks who boast of their radio exploits and their amplifiers and contests.

The websites, of course, take no responsibility for the information or material posted in forums or message boards. They describe them as strictly for entertainment or educational purposes.

Some education the B-P-L industry is sure to get; perhaps a crash or will that be clash course in CB radio.

For now, we'll have to watch and wait.

CBers say they're watching, too. And some of them are vowing no one will stop them from operating as they please.

Stay tuned. For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia

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To get an idea as to the power that some of the highly illegal competition grade C-B stations run, take your web browser to www.bigradios.com and follow the numerous links from there. (ARNewsline(tm))

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THE BPL FIGHT: CINCINNATI WATCH OUT

Meantime, Cincinnati Ohio may be among the first to have Broadband over Powerlines across the entire area. This, as a division of Cinergy Corporation announces plans to offer high-speed Internet service over its power lines.

According a March 2nd release, Cinergy Broadband is pairing with the Maryland based Current Communications Group to offer the service in parts of Cincinnati this year. Plans also call for an expansion into Kentucky and Indiana as the regional system grows.

Cinergy says that it hopes to initially market the service to 55,000 of its 1.5 million customers. A second venture will bring the technology to smaller municipal and cooperatively owned power companies, covering 24 million customers across the United States. The companies are committing more than $70 million to the effort. (ZD Net via Media Network)

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ENFORCEMENT: CONGRESSIONAL SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDS HIGHER FINES FOR INDECENCY

A congressional subcommittee has acted to substantially increase the fines assessed broadcasters who break indecency rules. Some legislators also say that repeat offenders should lose their licenses.

FCC officials have maintained for years that the current maximum fine of $27,500 is too small to serve as a deterrent for large broadcasters who view the fines as a cost of doing business. Now, under a bill recently passed by the House Internet and Telecommunications subcommittee, monetary forfeitures issued by the FCC would be increased by a factor of ten to $275,000 per violation. The cap on the fines would go to a maximum of $3 million.

There is yet another possibility being floated among legislators and one that could come up when and if the bill hits the House floor. That would be to hold performers and others appearing in the electronic media directly responsible for their own words, much the same way as is done in other radio services including ham radio.

But one law maker has cautioned to enlarge the scope of the proposed legislation to far. Representative Fred Upton cautioned that lawmakers should be careful not to expand the bill to the point where it might run afoul of free-speech rights guaranteed by the Constitution. If that happens, Upton says that it could very well buckle under its own weight. (Published news reports)

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RADIO LAW: FCC SAYS IT TIME FOR LOW POWER BROADCAST RADIO

The FCC says that Congress should lift the restrictions it has placed on the introduction of low power FM broadcast stations. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, is here with the rest of the

story:

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In a February 20th statement, the FCC said that its inquiry shows that low power FM stations serving highly specific audiences in small areas do not interfere with the operations of large broadcasters. Also, that they will not keep audiences from hearing the higher power commercial stations as the industry claims.

When the FCC first suggested creating the low power or community radio option. commercial broadcasters and public radio stations complained. The argued that low power stations would interfere with reception of their signals Congress responded by setting what amounted to an R-F no-man's land between the low power stations and existing broadcasters. This severely limited the number of tiny stations that the Commission could license.

Lawmakers also told the FCC to study the potential for interference. The agency spent several years doing just that. It has now concluded that stations running between 10 and 100 watts pose little risk to commercial stations whose power levels can be upward of 100,000 watts effective radiated.

Currently, there are about 300 low powered F-M stations on the air. Most are licensed to churches, school districts, youth organizations, highway departments, environmentalists and the like. By comparison, the nation's largest commercial broadcast radio chain, Clear Channel Communications owns 1,200 stations so far.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles.

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A spokesman for the National Association of Broadcasters termed the FCC report as flawed. (FCC)

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ON THE AIR: WYOMING STATION DX TEST MARCH 14

Meantime, a full power radio station is in the news and its a good news for hams and S-W-L's who like listening for rare ones on the A-M band. On Sunday, March 14th, radio station KEVA, 1240 kilohertz in Evanston, Wyoming will conduct a D-X test to find out how far its

signal can be heard.

According to Lynn Holman reporting over the Broadcast Employees remailer, the test will take place from 12:00 - 1 a.m. Mountain Standard Time and will consist of numerous Morse code I-D's emanating from a C-D created by Doug Smith, W9WI.

For a conformation card please send your reception reports with return postage to Michael Richard, KEVA-AM, P.O. Box 190, Evanston, Wyoming. The zipcode is 82931. (B.E.A.N.)

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CONFERENCES: EASTERN VHF-UHF IN CT. IN APRIL

Turning to ham radio meetings of note, the 30th annual Eastern VHF UHF Conference will take place next month, April 16th through the 18th at the Radisson Hotel in Enfield Connecticut. Among the program to be presented will be a special update on the "Status of VHF UHF Contesting & Awards Programs" will be Dan Henderson, N1ND of the ARRL. Also on hand will be Gerry Rodski, K3MKZ of SSB Electronic USA to manage the Preamp Noise Figure Measurement workshop and Chris Fagas, WB2VVV to oversee the antenna gain measurement range.

The conference is sponsored by the Eastern VHF UHF Society and the North East Weak Signal Groups. More information is available from Conference Chairman and Proceedings Editor Bruce Wood, N2LIV. E-mail him bdwood@erols.com or visit http://newsvhf.com on the World-Wide-Web. (VHF Reflector)

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CONFRENCES: SVHFS IN GEORGIA IN APRIL

And the 8th Annual Southeastern VHF Society Conference takes place in Marietta, Georgia on April 23 and 24th. Marietta is not far from, Atlanta and this years program highlights include sessions on pre-amp noise figure and gain measurement, antenna gain measurements, a back scratcher antenna competition and judging for the Mini-Circuits Annual Award for Design Achievement. Also expect a flea market, manufacturer exhibits, the annual auction, and card checking for VUCC. For more information on this one please take your web browser to www.svhfs.org (VHF Reflector)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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CHANGING OF THE GUARD: BAND LEADER ALVINO REY, W6UK - S.K.

Ham radio's changing of the guard continues. This with the sad news that Alvino Rey, W-6-U-K, has passed away.

Ray was 95 when he became a Silent Key from pneumonia in Sandy, Utah on Tuesday, February 24th. Best known as a swing-band leader of the '30s and '40s he was also an inventor and tinkerer who pioneered development of the pedal steel guitar. This instrument, and his ability to make it sound like it was talking became his musical trademark.

Born Alvin McBurney, in California he grew up in Cleveland Ohio. After beginning his music career in New York he changed his name to Rey in 1929 to capitalize on the then popular Latin music craze. Rey and his orchestra gained national fame with the 1942 hit, "Deep in the Heart of Texas." Nearly 25 years later, Rey was again in the national spotlight when he was featured for several seasons on ABC Television's "The King Family Show."

Ham radio wise, Ray loved to operate all modes, and, according to posts on the V-H-F reflector, was particularly fond of 6 meters. He was also active on all of the the high frequency bands over his many years in the hobby. (K6LAE, published news reports)

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WORLDBEAT - USA: BIG ANTI-PIRACY WIN

A federal judge in San Francisco has ruled that a software program that copies Digital Video Discs infringes on the copyrights of Hollywood studios. Judge Susan Illston ruled that software made by

321 Studios of Chesterfield, Missouri violates the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This law prohibits the circumvention of anti-piracy measures such as the Content Scramble System protecting movies on DVDs. Judge Illston ordered the company to stop making or distributing such software within seven days of her February 20th order. (News reports)

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WORLDBEAT - BELGIUM: HACKER GAL ARRESTED

Meantime, a Belgian computer hacker who has made an international name for herself as a woman in a male-dominated activity is facing criminal charges. Belgian police have arrested the 19-year-old technology student, confiscated her five computers and shut down her Web site.

A Belgian newspaper says that the woman, identified only by her nickname, Gigabyte was charged with computer data sabotage. Police tell the paper she was preparing to publish new viruses on her Website when she was taken into custody. If convicted, Gigabyte faces up to three years in prison and 127-thousand dollars in fines. (Computing)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: IOTA IN OCTOBER

And while its a long ways off, the dates of the Radio Society of Great Britain's International High Frequency and Islands on the Air Convention has just been announced. This year, the gathering will take place the weekend of Friday October 22nd to Sunday the 24th. Further announcements as to venue and the program will follow later on www.rsgb.org and the GB2RS news service from the U-K. (RSGB)

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NEW HAM PRODUCTS: THE JWM 1152 PHASE LOCKED OSCILLATOR

Looking at products of interest to ham radio experimenters, word that JWM Engineering Group has announced availability of a new phase locked oscillator. One designed to improve frequency control to microwave receivers and transmitters using crystal oscillator local oscillator chains.

According to Jerry Mulchin, N7EME, President of the JWM Engineering

Group, the Model 1152 eliminates the frequency uncertainty of most microwave transverter systems. Mulchin adds that Precise frequency control and stability eliminates at least one variable in establishing successful and enjoyable microwave communications. More information is on the web at http://jwmeng.com. (JWM Engineering Group)

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CONTESTS: WB6ACU AND K9EID ON FROM W1AW

On the radiosport page, the ARRL phone contest on March 6th and 7th will have had some well known hams operating from the League's W1AW flagship station this year. According to a note from Bob Heil, K9EID, he and famed rock guitarist Joe Walsh, WB6ACU of the Eagles will be on the air from League headquarters during contest. A special picture QSL will be sent to those who work Joe or Bob. QSL to their respective call directory addresses. (K9EID)

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DX

In DX, PA5M has been active as 9U5M from Burundi since the 17th of February and will stay in the country until the 17th of March. He operates in his spare time, typically after 1600 UTC, on 10 to 40 meters CW and SSB.

And W7EJ is in Morocco until the end of March. He plans to be active as CN2R in the CQ 160-Meter SSB, ARRL DX SSB and CQ WPX SSB contests.

Also, DJ4SO is active portable V-51 from Namibia through the 15th. He plans to operate on 160 to 6 meters mainly CW, RTTY and PSK 31 with some SSB.

Lastly, ZS6Y reports he is active with the special callsign ZS10RSA until mid-May. This, to celebrate 10 years of democracy in that nation. For all of these operations, QSL as directed on the air.

(This weeks DX news courtesy of GB2RS)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE ORIGIN OF ELECTRONIC SPAM

And finally this week, a brief lesson on something we dread every time we check our e-mail. You know what it is. Unwanted junk e-mail that people have come to call Spam. Ever wonder why? Here's Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, with some details that probably very few people know:

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We all know that Spam is the trade name of a canned meat product. At least I suspect that most of you do. But have you ever wondered where the phrase "spam" in relation to unsolicited junk e-mail came from. Well, blame it on the computer nerds who were fans of one of the worlds greatest comedy ensembles.

It seems that the term began being applied to junk electronic mail in the early 1990's by computer geeks. It was based on a 1970 Monty Python skit in which an exasperated restaurant customer is urged to order the meat until she screams: ''Stop it already. I don't want any Spam!''

And that was it. And now you do know the rest of the story.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline. I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the City of Angels.

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To which Ill add the rhetorical question: How many of us open our e-mail boxes each day and want yell the same thing? (Tnx to Q-News, CGC, others who sent this item along.)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73 and we thank you for listening. Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.